



TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

Sustainable Communities

Transit Oriented Development (TOD) is a strategy for developing a mix of uses that can support existing neighborhoods and communities that are accessible by public transportation. This is not a new concept in the Boston area; development centered around transportation hubs has been a large part of Boston's growth since the earliest horse-drawn railways. In fact, we live in a uniquely transit-oriented region, where 25% of the region's housing units and 37% of the region's employment is within a half-mile of a rapid transit or commuter rail station.

Now Metro Boston is experiencing a new wave of growth near transit, with hundreds of residential and commercial developments underway and more on the horizon. Cities and towns are creating station area plans and updating zoning to unlock development potential; the MBTA is accepting proposals for major developments on prime T-owned parcels; state agencies are using transit proximity as a criteria for prioritizing infrastructure and housing resources; and the development community is responding to a strong market for residential and commercial space near the T.

There are good reasons for this reawakened interest in transit oriented development: new growth near transit stations can help reduce congestion, improve affordability, and satisfy the growing demographic preference for transit proximity.

TOD Best Practices

- Looking at the market, zoning, demographic, and transportation elements together leads to integrated and achievable TOD plans.
- Showing what buildings could look like through visualizations illustrates zoning concepts and elevates the understanding and engagement of participants.
- A development feasibility analysis on the MBTA parking lot in Wollaston helped identify the levels of development needed to make the development financially feasible for a developer, which in turn helped inform the new zoning recommendations.

UNCOVERING OPPORTUNITIES AND IMPEDIMENTS TO TOD

MAPC analyzed the station areas around four MBTA rail stations in three communities: Quincy, Melrose, and Beverly. The project began with a residential/retail/office market analysis of the four station areas by a sub-consultant. Then, for each station, MAPC completed a zoning analysis, visualizations, and developed recommendations for enhancements to the transportation network and public realm. New zoning recommendations were developed to reflect the community's vision for the station areas and to create a flexible environment for the development and permitting of future projects.

Outcomes

- Melrose changed the base zoning around its stations and adopted an overlay district for the area in between stations
- Quincy is considering re-zoning the Wollaston area
- Melrose received a \$1M MassWorks Grant for street improvements around Highland Station
- New development across from Wollaston station based on the plan's zoning (.5 parking spaces/unit).
- 115 units of assisted living in the pipeline in Melrose as a result of the zoning change
- Quincy created a temporary parklet to continue the public dialogue about Wollaston and its public space
- MAPC completed a follow-on parking study in Wollaston and the City is currently implementing the resulting parking management recommendations
- Plans set the stage for hundreds of new housing units located near these stations as well as new businesses in first floor retail spaces
- The MBTA is making significant changes to Wollaston station, which will help with bike, pedestrian, and ADA access
- At least 5 miles of bike lanes should emerge from the plans as well as new and improved pedestrian facilities (e.g. sidewalks, crossings, and pedestrian signals)
- Hundreds of new riders on the MBTA as a result of new businesses and housing built around these stations



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This planning effort spearheaded a conversation amongst residents, the business community, and city officials on how to move forward with developing and implementing a vision for Wollaston Center.

Kristina Johnson,

Director of Transportation Planning, City of Quincy, MA



RE-ENVISIONING WOLLASTON A Station Area Plan for Wollaston Center

The residents, businesses, and property owners in Wollaston Center created a vision to maintain the walkable, transit-friendly, and diverse neighborhood while adding new housing options and businesses to enliven the center.



TOD Planning Services:

- Demographic and market analysis
- Identifying development opportunities
- Streetscape and public realm improvements
- Visualizations
- Zoning recommendations
- Community engagement
- Transportation connectivity including bicycle and pedestrian planning

Before and After Renderings of Beale Street, Quincy, MA



Vision Map for Wollaston Center

- shows potential development parcels (now mostly surface parking lots) and how the area could be improved by bike and pedestrian connections and with a consistent streetscape treatment.

